effect from 1.4.2007 *vide* Customs Notification No. 48/2007 dated 29.03.2007.

**Salt-pan workers in India**

3668. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total number of salt-pan workers in India as on 31st March, 2007, State-wise;

(b) what is the total amount of salt cess collected from Gujarat and " Maharastra during the last three years State-wise; and

(c) how much from the amount was spent for the welfare of salt-pan workers; State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL POLICY AND PROMOTION, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) The estimated number of salt workers during 2006 is as below:—

| State | Number of Salt workers |
|---|---|
| Gujarat | 81408 |
| Tamil Nadu | 16482 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 15478 |
| Rajasthan | 9995 |
| Maharashtra | 1987 |
| Orissa | 1425 |
| West Bengal | 235 |
| Karnataka | 129 |
| Goa | 84 |
| Himachal Pradesh | 30 |
| TOTAL | 127253 |

(b) The total amount of Salt Cess collected during 2004-05 to 2006-07 from the States of Gujarat and Maharashtra is Rs. 697.25 lakh and Rs. 17.21 lakh respectively.

(c) The entire amount of Salt Cess collected is deposited into the Consolidated Fund of India and funds are released for welfare of salt-pan workers through annual budget allocation under non-plan and plan schemes. The State-wise information of the amount spent during 2004-05 to 2006-07 for welfare of salt workers is given in the Statement.

***Statement***

*Amount spent on the welfare of salt-pan workers*

(Rs. In Lakh)

| State | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 (Provisional) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gujarat | 197.93 | 423.91 | 634.26 |
| Tamilnadu | 17.78 | 90.12 | 181.62 |
| Orissa | 43.15 | 0.34 | 134.39 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 15.43 | 0.22 | 77.72 |
| Rajasthan | 74.17 | 33.43 | 57.11 |
| Maharashtra | 0.60 | 0.19 | 0.80 |
| Karnataka | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.30 |
| TOTAL | 349.06 | 548.21 | 1086.20 |

**Increasing employment in non-farm sector**

3669. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Government have any programme for increasing employment in the non-farm sector in the rural areas and increasing the wage level in rural employment particularly in the North Eastern Region;